

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 02691 141644 Z

67

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 NEA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09

H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

SS-15 USIA-12 RSR-01 /121 W
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R 141620 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1858

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 2691

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TS, AG

SUBJECT: BOURGUIBA- BOUMEDIENNE MEETING: CONCERN ABOUT LIBYA?

REF: TUNIS 2519

1. ALGERIAN PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENNE ARRIVED IN WESTERN TUNISIAN CITY OF LE KEF FOR TWO DAYS OF TALKS WITH PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA MAY 11 AND 12. MEETING WAS HEAVILY PLAYED UP IN TUNISIAN PRESS, WHICH HAD ORIGINALLY STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF VISIT IN FIELD OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION, INCLUDING SPECIFIC MENTION OF VARIOUS PROJECTS IMPLYING ALGERIAN ASSISTANCE TO TUNISIA. JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED ON MAY 13, HOWEVER, WAS CONFINED TO GENERALITIES ABOUT COMMON VIEWS ON MIDDLE EAST, PARTICULARLY PALESTINIAN PROBLEM, AND FURTHER GENERALITIES ON COOPERATION IN AFRICA AND AMONG THIRD WORLD POWERS. BILATERAL MATTERS IN COMMUNIQUE LIMITED TO CALLING FOR REENFORCEMENT OF " SOLIDARITY AND COMPLEMENTARITY" IN ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL FIELDS. NO SPECIFIC PROJECTS FOR SUCH COOPERATION WERE MENTIONED. (TEXT OF COMMUNIQUE REPORTED BY FBIS.)

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PAGE 02 TUNIS 02691 141644 Z

2. EMBASSY SOURCE WHO HAS CLOSE CONTACTS WITH ALGERIAN EMBASSY TUNIS REPORTS THAT ALGERIANS WERE SOMEWHAT ANNOYED AT TUNISIAN TENDENCY STRESS POSSIBILITIES FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION. SAME SOURCE REPORTS THAT BOUMEDIENNE IS NOT INCLINED TO PROVIDE ANY ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO TUNISIA AT THIS TIME, PRIMARILY BECAUSE HE IS SOMEWHAT CONCERNED WITH TUNISIAN INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION -- RECENT STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, LABOR TROUBLES, BOURGUIBA'S OPEN ATTACKS ON " LIBERAL" ELEMENTS OF PSD, ETC. THERE ARE ALSO REPORTS CIRCULATING IN DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES THAT BOUMEDIENNE INTENDED TO RAISE TUNISIAN INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION IN TALKS WITH BOURGUIBA, BUT WE DOUBT VERY MUCH BOUMEDIENNE ACTUALLY DID SO.

3. WE CONSIDER IT LIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT BOURGUIBA AND BOUMEDIENNE DISCUSSED DEVELOPMENTS IN LIBYA AT SOME LENGTH. SOURCE QUOTED ABOVE REPORTS THAT BOUMEDIENNE IS TRULY CONCERNED THAT QADHAFI IS NOW MENTALLY UNBALANCED, IF NOT COMPLETELY MAD. FOR EXAMPLE, QADHAFI, DURING RECENT MEETING WITH BOUMEDIENNE IN TRIPOLI, REPORTEDLY PROPOSED TO ALGERIANS THAT LIBYA AND ALGERIA ENGAGE IN OPEN ARMED ATTACK AGAINST MOROCCO. OUR SOURCE REPORTS THAT BOUMEDIENNE NATURALLY REJECTED ANY SUCH SUGGESTION; THAT HE HAS REFUSED TO AGREE TO ANY LIBYAN FORCES BEING STATIONED IN ALGERIA (AS QADHAFI ALSO PROPOSED); AND THAT HE IS VERY CONCERNED BY QADHAFI'S STATE OF MIND. TUNISIANS, WE BELIEVE, HAVE SIMILAR CONCERNS. RELPH

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